

POEMS BY
JOHN FULLERTON
"WILD ROSE"

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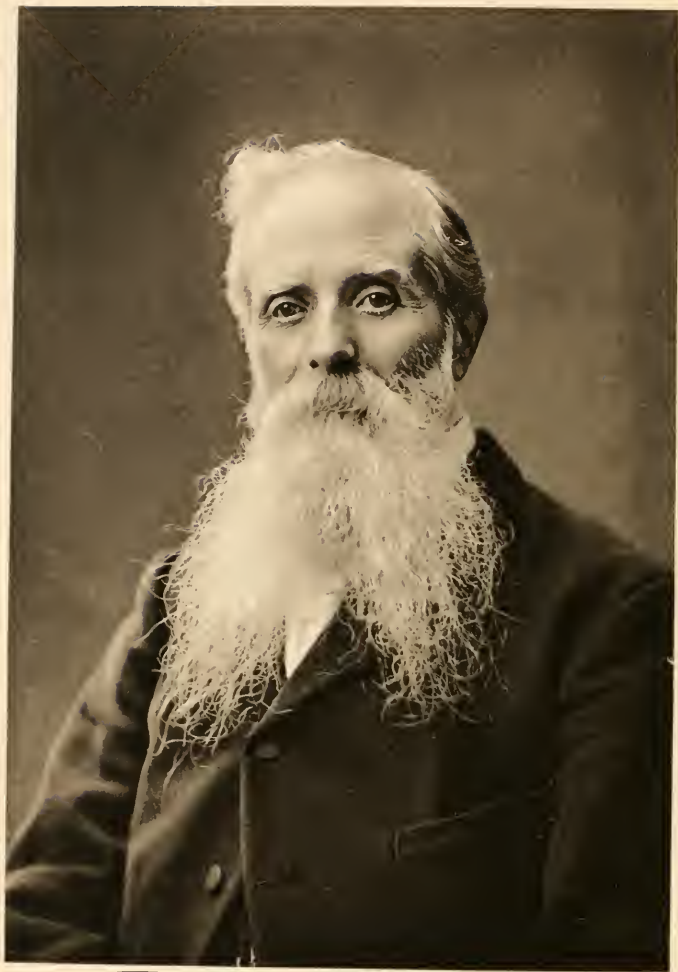


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POEMS.



Yours ever
John Fuller

MASSACHUSETTS
JAN 1 1880

POEMS

BY

JOHN FULLERTON.

"WILD ROSE." //

PETERHEAD :

P. SCROGIE, OBSERVER WORKS,

1905.

*Dies not the Rose when it doth droop and fade ;
Its gentle loveliness and fragrance sweet
Live long in human memory.*

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TO
THE FRIENDS AND ADMIRERS
OF
JOHN FULLERTON.

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N O T E.

The fifty Poems composing this Volume have been selected from an extensive collection with a view to showing the work of the author in various moods.

All the poems have appeared from time to time in local newspapers, magazines, and other publications.

M E M O I R.

It was kindly suggested to me by a few of Mr Fullerton's personal friends that a Memorial Volume of his Poems should be printed, and that, if I would provide the material, they would see to their publication. In this proposal I was only too pleased to acquiesce. Accordingly they formed a committee for the purpose of carrying out the scheme.

It was also suggested that I should prepare a brief Memoir, a task which I undertook with much trepidation, knowing how imperfectly I should be able to perform it.

John Fullerton was born on the 11th September, 1836, in the then village of Woodside, now included in the City of Aberdeen. His parents were respectable people, much esteemed amongst the villagers. The father was one of those mechanical geniuses who quietly (perhaps too quietly for themselves) do "the day's work." He both invented and perfected not a few useful agricultural implements. The mother, amidst the daily cares of a large family, consisting of eight sons and two daughters (of whom Mr Fullerton was the first-born), found time to read with interest and profit such books of history, travel, poetry, and fiction as she could lay her hands on. She was, besides, a sweet singer of those olden ballads which, some sixty years ago, were sung or recited at almost every Scottish fireside.

In his tenth year, John Fullerton voluntarily left school. He found work in an extensive cotton mill; and, during the period of his employment there, he regularly attended an evening school in his native village. Here he seems to have made considerable progress in the study of English, as some time afterwards, he succeeded in carrying off the prize in that subject, as a student in the Mechanics' Institute, Aberdeen. His subsequent career was a busy and full-handed one—marked, nevertheless, by a distinct upward tendency. Superior capacity for work and admirable application of talent characterised his business relations throughout his whole career.

An omnivorous reader, he early developed the power of expressing his thoughts in prose and verse; and he was not yet twenty years of age when he began to contribute to the local press.

Mr Fullerton remained in Aberdeen until 1870, when he removed to Peterhead with his family, having accepted an appointment as writer to Messrs A. & W. Boyd, solicitors, there. In Peterhead he remained for over twenty years, taking, as he had done in Aberdeen, an active and prominent interest in literary and kindred societies.

In 1890, he removed to Pitfour, Mintlaw, as assistant factor under Mr Ainslie (a nephew of Hew Ainslie, the Scoto-American poet). The extensive and beautiful estate of Pitfour is owned by Colonel Ferguson, by whom, as well as by the Hon. Mrs Ferguson, he was ever held in high esteem; and few events occurred in connection with the family that his pen did not cheerfully record. In the Pitfour service he died, virtually in harness, on the 29th July, 1904.

Throughout life, Mr Fullerton continued to be a regular contributor both in prose and verse to various magazines and to the newspaper press. Some of his poetical fancies found more permanent form in the shape of pamphlets. "The Ghaist o' Dennilair" was written in 1870, and ran into several editions. "O! Farrochmo," 1886, appeared after the death of Lord Dalkeith. Mr Fullerton was persuaded to enter this poem into a ballad competition. Although not, strictly speaking, a ballad, it was admitted, and carried off a prize. Pure poetic beauty was attributed to it, and it was admitted to be the finest contribution in the competition. His other poems give touching and vivid glimpses of Nature; but it would be impossible to convey any complete idea of the extent and variety of Mr Fullerton's poetic efforts. This present collection, sufficient for the purposes of a memorial volume, forms but a small portion of the poet's musings on Parnassus. Besides there are, so to speak, almost endless songs and sonnets, contributed to an ever-widening circle of friends on occasions joyous or mournful in their lives, and with whom his sympathy was a very real matter, which perhaps accounts for the fact, as his correspondence shows, that the *nom de plume* "Wild Rose," was dear to many a home and many a heart.



THE CHAPEL WALK, PITFOUR.

The variety of Mr Fullerton's pen names has been remarked upon. "He seemed to have," says a writer, whose tribute lies before me, "a pen name to suit each mood of his poetic fancy." "Wild Rose" covered sonnets dealing with tragic circumstances, and national losses. It was his favourite signature, reserved for his more serious efforts. Pieces marked by pure poetic imagery were signed now "Alice Douglas," and again "Robin Goodfellow," or, it might be, "Rob Gibb," "The Vicar of Deepdale," or the simple initials, "J. F." "He was a master of the muse," this writer continues, "and wrote with supreme delicacy of touch, and fine poetic feeling. Nature, in all her varying moods, stirred his poetic soul; and in the sylvan shades of Pitfour—the green oasis of Aberdeenshire—he found the inspiration of many a congenial theme. John Fullerton was a true lover of Nature, and was fortunate in being placed among such beautiful surroundings, where he could roam at will after office hours, enjoying the soft breeze by wood and lake. He knew and could name all the trees, shrubs, plants, and wild flowers within the wide policies, and took an ever-living interest in birds and bees."

Where ferns are stirred by the soft Summer breeze,
And perfume from wild roses fills the air,
I lie to-day and listen to the bees,
On humming wing, swift-coursing o'er my head
To fields of clover yonder in the vale.

John Fullerton was most industrious with his pen, which was rarely out of his hand. I often wondered how he managed to sustain the self-imposed task so long at a time; and it was not less puzzling that he seemed to be able to listen, while writing, to some of us reading. In winter he worked far into the night; in summer he was astir when none were about but himself and the birds. I never heard him say he was tired of writing till near the end, when he could not hold the pen. He asked me then to take down some verses, one of which I give—

Tired, so tired, I'll rest until the end will come,
And God in his mercy shall call me home,
My journeyings done, and all my dreamings o'er,
To be resumed again on the Eternal Shore.

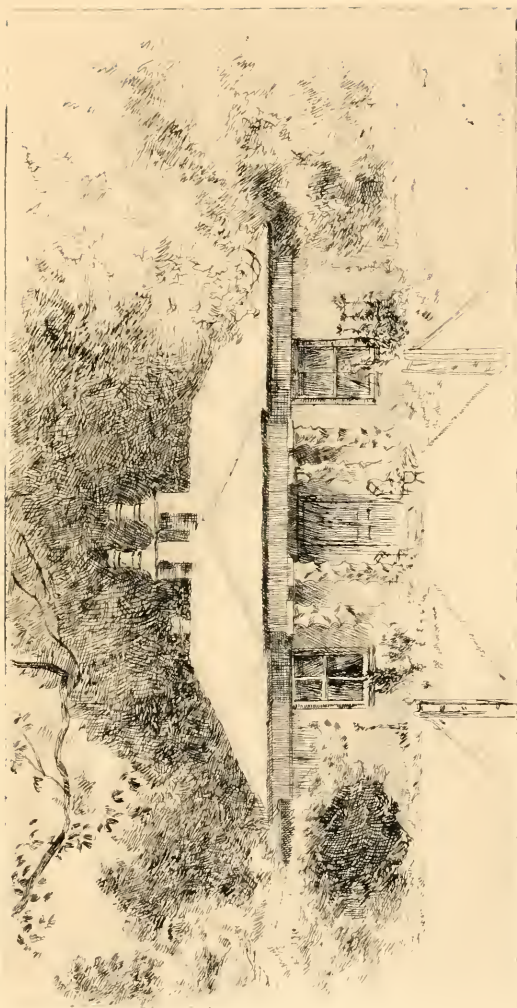
Mr Fullerton was a man of simple tastes and simple habits. With him home life was happy and serene. His recreation he found near the cottage. To those of us who looked upon the scene from the door, it was amusing to watch the friendship that existed between him and the birds. Whenever he sent up his peculiar call, they were soon hopping round him ; and they seemed to know he had crumbs for them. These he would lay on his open hand, from which he would entice them to eat. Only one bird, a robin red-breast, would do that, however ; and the robin is such a shy bird until the snow sends him to the dwellings of men. But this particular bird kept near the cottage for two years, and fed often from Mr Fullerton's open hand, apparently feeling quite at ease. And when it disappeared, great was the lamentation. Similarly, his love for pigeons was intense. He kept a flock of these ; and whenever they saw him coming from the office they flew in a body to meet him, hovering round him until he reached the cottage door, where they were sure of a meal before he got his own.

Into the purely domestic circle I cannot enter ; but this I cannot help saying, that John Fullerton was a good husband, an indulgent father, a most devoted and sympathetic companion. The dominant note of his life was one of prolonged tenderness, kindness, goodness, and truth, with a deep love for Nature and all living things.

Perhaps he was worthy the tribute his friend, Mr Bulloch, has paid to his memory—"I never knew any one so essentially poetical. His life was a poem exemplifying those qualities we most esteem, diffidence, charity, sincerity. Happy in his home life, in his books, and in his friends, John Fullerton was a lovable man."

HELEN FULLERTON.

ROSE COTTAGE, PETERHEAD,
September, 1905.



THE POETS HOME PITFOUR

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P O E M S.

NOTE.

"The Ghaist o' Dennilair" was written with a view to preserve a Legend, long, and at one time very commonly known in the district of Fyvie. Care was taken to retain, in the Ballad, all the incidents contained in the Legend, and these were gleaned in the district from those who took an interest in matters of the kind. This version of the Ballad was first printed in Peterhead in 1870 and became popular—a second edition being speedily called for. Having appeared anonymously the question of authorship was raised from time to time, but has long been settled. The writer of this note collected the incidents made use of and handed them to Mr Fullerton who wove them so successfully into verse. This is not the first time the story has been told in Ballad form, but all efforts to procure a copy of the older versions were in vain. Dennilair is a picturesque ravine which runs directly from the Parsonage, All-Saints', Woodhead, to the Ythan, a little above where it enters the Braes o' Gight, and is one of the loveliest spots in a district justly famed for its beautiful scenery, of which one might well say :

"A' the sweets that ane can wish
Frae Nature's hand, are strew'd on thee."

D. S.

THE GHAIST O' DENNILAIR :

A Legend of Fyvie.

OH, weirdly wild is Dennilair !
The bravest, bauldest, dinna care
To wanner, e'en 'mid noontide's glare,
Doon by its stream ;
Though fair the flowers that deck its braes,
An' blythe the birds that lilt their lays,
Nae sweet-faced bairns there mak' their plays,
Or happy dream.

At nicht, when a' is husht an' still,
Save wind's low sabbin' on the hill,
Or eident flow o' stream an' rill,
Ghaists meet, they say ;
An' when the mune is i' the west,
An' larks begin to leave the nest,
Ane, troubled mair than a' the rest,
Alane will stray.

Wi' face as white's the driven snaw,
He noiseless glints through leafy shaw,
But blossoms feel nae his foot-fa',
 He treads sae licht ;
An' aft, as 'neath a tree he stan's,
He wrings in wae his fleshless han's,
But nane will stop to tak' comman's
 Frae sic a wicht.

Ae fearfu' nicht o' win' an' rain—
The like o't's ne'er been seen again—
A cottar's wife was seized wi' pain
 On jizzen-bed,—
The guidman raise, drest in a crack,
But spak nae till on *Daisy's* back,—
“ My wife, wae's me, is on the rack
 An' near han' dead !

“ An' I'm nae keen aboot this road ;
I winner gin the ghaist's abroad,
That *Daisy* swithers 'neath her load
 'Tween death an' life ?”

He digs the spurs deep in her sides,
An' wi' a death-like tremor rides ;
The ford is passed, he sees whaur bides
The canny wife.

Oh, weirdly wild is Dennilair
When claps o' thunner rend the air,
An' forket lightning's vivid glare
Sets hills a-flame,
When eerie soughs swall o' the breeze,
An' sabs an' sichts come thro' the trees ;
The guidman's blood was like to freeze
As he rade hame.

“Cross nae the ford,” the dame implores,
“The water's deep—hear hoo it roars—
An', oh, I fear the ghaist's afore's ;
On sic a nicht,
We'll meet him lone on bank or brae ;
Oh turn, guidman, till brak o' day ;
We're far eneuch this dreary way—
I'll dee wi' fricht.”

In vain she begs ; nae cry he hears
As doon the broken road he tears,
His ain heart beatin' lood wi' fears
That winna rest ;
Still deeper in auld *Daisy's* sides
He ca's the spurs as on he rides ;
Nor cares tho' ilka hillock hides
A fearsome ghaist.

He nears the ford, the dame a-hin',
The sheltie tearin' on like win',—
“ He's swift o' fit wha'll tak' me in,”
The guidman says.
Alack ! when hauf-way thro' the ford,
He hears a groan an' syne a word,
An' sees a fleshless han'—“ The Lord
Preserves !” he prays.

Ye ride richt fast, my brave guidman ;
But dinna fear my fleshless han',
I'se guide yer beast wi' care an' cann
Thro' ford an' flood ;

I ken ilk fit o' Dennilair,
In winter bleak, an' simmer fair
I've travelled here, baith late an' air,
Hill, dale, an' wood ;

“ But naething stranger than mysel'
I ve seen—it is the truth I tell—
An' naething strange to me befel
Thae twenty years.

But whaurfore dee ye ride the nicht?—
I ken—nor winner at yer fricht ;
But ye'll be safe, an' I'll be richt,
Sae calm yer fears.

“ Wae's me ! I've waited lang and sair—
Thae twice ten dreary years an' mair—
For sic a tryste by Dennilair ;
Joy gars me greet ;
For weel I ken yer loon's first cry
Will brak' the spells that o' me lie ;
Then to the dead I'll creep in-by,
'Neath gowans sweet.

“ The haly kirk, it cursed me thrice ;
A pair o’ glives, three groats the price,
Was a’ I stole—they warn a nice,

Gey waur o’ wear ;

An’ aye sin’ syne, wi’ troubled breast,
I’ve wanner’d here a restless ghaist,
Forsaken, shunned, unloved, unblest,
Year efter year.

“ An’ sae, guidman, at break o’ day
Gang to the tree on yonder brae—
The leafless aik wi’ branches grey ;—

Aneath its stem

Dig deep, till four grey groats ye see,
Then to the priest the glives’ price gie,
Wha cuist his malison on me ;—

Noo, there’s yer hame.”

Nae mair, when a’ is husht and still
Save wind’s low sabbin’ on the hill,
Or tinklin’ flow o’ stream an’ rill,
Ghaists noiseless stray

Weird Dennilair is weird nae mair ;
The ghaist is laid, an' flow'ries fair
Bloom o'er his grave, an' scent the air
Baith nicht an' day.

Oh, bonnie are the braes o' Gight !
When simmer days are lang an' bricht,
I'd lie upo' them day an' nicht,
Nor dream o' care ;
But listen to the sang o' birds,
The flow o' streams, an' low o' herds ;
A book o' music wantin' words
Is Dennilair.

STANZAS—ROBERT BURNS.

What sounds of mirth are those that greet my ear ?
When was old Scotland's heart so gay and glad ?
Smiles light all faces, none on earth look sad,
Eyes glow with love where lately shone the tear ;
In every village man to brother man
Whispers a name beloved by all below ;
Never, methinks, since time on earth began
Have there been such rejoicings and such show.

And well it is that Scotia wills it so,
Not only Scotia, but her sister isles ;
For on this day a hundred years ago
A mother to her breast, with loving smiles,
Pressed close a little babe, a gifted son,
Not given to the great and famed of earth,
But to a toil-worn peasant, who had won
Respect not riches, to his lowly hearth.

That child grew up a fair and comely youth,
We see him treading as his father trod
The bless'd paths of honesty and truth,
Looking from nature up to nature's God.
Oh! how he loved to roam by Doon's green braes
In summer's prime, when bloomed the sweet wild flowers,
As thrush and blackbird warbled forth their lays
Amid th' o'erhanging boughs and leafy bowers.

'Twas then the Muse looked smiling from her hill,
And flung her mantle at the poet's feet,
And bade him tune the lyre and earth should thrill—
Should listen spell-bound to his music sweet.
Ah! yes, what poet ever struck that lyre
To such sweet music, such soul-melting lays—
That youth's fond heart felt all the poet's fire—
Yet while he lived he lacked his meed of praise.
How oft 'tis thus, that, while the poet lives,
The world frowns on him as its meanest slave,
And lends no helping hand, no honour gives,
Till the sad heart lies sleeping in the grave!

Years passed, and Burns, the gifted son of song,
Swerved from the path he trod in youth's gay prime :
Too oft, alas ! he swell'd that countless throng
Who pass in drunken revelry their time.
Sad tears I weep ; 'twas thus he sowed the seeds,
That ripened, cut him off in manhood's days ;
No wonder then that oft my young heart bleeds,
That sweet voice ceased ere half sung were its lays ;
Yet do we hope, Oh ! say 'tis not in vain,
That he who sang on earth sings now in heaven,
That other lyre 'tis his to touch again,
That all life's errors were ere death forgiven.
Alas ! these lines but feebly speak the praise
Of Scotland's greatest poet, Robert Burns,
The sweetest singer of love's tender lays—
To whom, though dead, the wide world's large heart
yearns.

25th January, 1859.

AFTER LONG YEARS.

A Dream, and in Memory.

Footsore and weary at my cottage door,
In the soft twilight of a summer eve,
Stood one I had not seen for long, long years.

How changed ! I had not known him—Time had left
Its care lines on his once fair open brow,
And scatter'd 'mong his raven locks its snows—

I had not known him, only for his voice,
Which had not lost, through all those changeful years,
The mellow tones that like sweet music touched
My heart, and made me, oh, so happy when he spake !

O blessed night ! Seated beside the hearth
Both felt that time had kindly dealt with both
Throughout the lonesome years we strove apart ;
And so we gladly talked of pleasant strolls
Down woodlands olden, when Spring brought her flow'rs,
And 'mid the boughs the merry songsters sang—
Talk'd of the loved ones round whose sunlit brows
We wove bright garlands of the fair wild flow'r's,
And of those dear friends in the lone churchyard,
Above whose graves the spotless snowdrops bend,
Summer winds sigh, and snows of winter lie.

O, I was happy, happy as we talked
Of joys, and loves, and sorrows, of the years
Departed, since on that dull April morn,
With sadden'd hearts we parted on the shore !

And so the night sped on till grey dawn peeped
In at the window with its wakeful eye,
Bidding us part, who had been parted years.

O, dreary morn ! though larks' songs filled the air,
I woke to find my friend of youthful years
No longer with me talking of the past.

O, never, 'mid the twilight's softened shade,
He'll stand footsore and weary at my door ;
And I shall look no more into his eyes,
Nor listen to the music of his voice !

The grave, that has so many dear to me,
Has closed above him in the far fair land ;
But we shall one day meet

O, FARROCHMO!

O, Farrochmo ! mists shroud your brow through all the
coming years ;
For where he lies your heather-bloom is bathed with blood
and tears ;
And o'er your summit wild birds scream as swift they wing
their flight
Away from the dark spot where sit the watchers all the
night.

O, rivers, twain ! flow sad to-day around those grey old
towers,
And tell your sorrow as ye flow to winds and woods and
flowers ;
On yonder green hillside afar, and 'neath the moon's cold
ray
The life blood of a noble heart is ebbing fast away.

O, night winds ! dally with his locks in clusters o'er his
brow,

And kiss those cheeks and pallid lips, so still and ice-cold
now,

And then go sighing down the glens and round the grey
old towers,

A requiem for the brave young heart asleep in life's bright
hours.

O, silent woods ! bend low your boughs, and, with the rivers
twain,

Be stirred to sorrow for the lad that ne'er comes home
again :

Soon 'midst your shadows, long and deep, he'll rest where
grasses wave ;

O, silent woods ! your brown leaves shed above his tear-
dewed grave.

O, autumn flowers ! strew tenderly your blossoms o'er the
bier

Of him who watched you break the sod when spring smiled
on the year ;

No more his loving hands will tend your firstlings where
they grow ;
O, autumn flowers ! your blossoms strew o'er him now
lying low.

O, rivers twain ! no more again, with lightsome step and
free
As in days fled, the loved of all will roam by park and lea ;
No more his merry laugh be heard above you where you
glide—
A gentle breast has throbbed its last on yonder bleak hill-
side.

O, silent woods ! beneath the stars, each heart with grief
full sore,
The watchers wait by him they love, whose pulse beats
now no more—
Wait till the dawn of day creeps o'er the cloudless eastern
sky,
A death-like silence over all, and tears within each eye.

O, rivers twain ! seek still the shade, for far from you
to-day

Down Auchnacarry's leaf-strewn paths the watchers wend
their way,

Bearing with them a burden sad, and, oh, above each heart
And on each brow a sorrow sits years may not lift apart !

A shadow rests above these towers your waters mirror
deep :

The lad so light and gay yestreen now sleeps his long last
sleep.

O, rivers twain ! no more again the heir of those fair lands
Will smile into his mother's face, and touch her willing
hands.

ST MACHAR.

Within the old churchyard I sit alone, no loved one near
To listen to my 'plaining voice or bid me stay the tear ;
The night winds wail amid the trees, and pale stars stud
the sky :
On me those gems of Heaven shine as with a pitying
eye.

There is no spot, afar or near, stream, river, hill, nor wood,
That meets my gaze as here I sit in eventide's solitude—
No flower nor blossom 'mid the grass around which hums
the bee,
But tells me true, as words may tell, how dear thou art to
me.

I'm sitting—night is o'er me, and a stillness softly mild
Reigns round the grey old minster like the breathings of a
child,

Now the winds are hushed to whispers—alone, no loved
one near ;

I'll kneel above thy grass-grown grave, and o'er it shed a
tear.

.

Oh, churchyard of St Machar by the winding river Don,
Thy leafy trees they shadow now, of loved ones dead and
gone,

My father of the kindly heart, my mother rich in care,
My brothers in the morn of life, a sister young and fair.

Though mount and stream and rivers twain St Machar hide
from me,

In dreams and visions of the night its grey old towers I see.

.

IN LOVE WITH NATURE.

'Tis not for fickle fame I woo the muse ;
No poet's fire inflames my heart and soul ;
Still must I sing, as birds in spring-time sing,
Though rude my song, of Nature's loveliness.

I love all Nature, upland grove, and hill,
The dancing streamlet, and the loit'ring rill,
Thé sweetly blooming flower, gay bird, and bee,
The cloud-capped mountain, stunted shrub, and tree ;
And the wide ocean, restful, or wind-swept,
Wrathful waves, foam-capped, breaking on the beach,—
All move my soul and ever bring delight.

I love all Nature, and though nevermore
My wayward feet will tread the grassy plains,
Or wander near the streams that singing flow
Down glen or grove, in fancy I can go
To those loved spots, where in the long ago,
Happy at heart, I strayed when Spring returned,
Till shadows of the night lay round me, then,
Full pleased I'd view the well-known haunts of yore.

Aerial spirit on Parnassian heights,
Come, aid me in my fancy's feeble flights,
Come to me in the night's lone silent hours,
Come, bind around my brow thy fadeless flowers,
Come, touch my faltering lyre and wake its fire,
That I may sing, e'en though my strains are rude,
Of Nature's varied beauties, vale and wood,
And the eternal hills' deep solitude.

AN AUTUMN PÆAN.

Summer's sweet reign is o'er, and faded her wild wood
flowers,

The violets that smiled in the glens, the roses that blushed
in the bowers ;

From grove and meadow have flown the birds that with
joyous lay

Gladdened the heart of man, or welcomed the dawn of day.

Sweetly amid the brown leaves, from the poplars at the
gate,

Robin now trills his notes all day till the sun has set :

Dearly I love the lone bird, for, like a true friend to me,

He comes with his old cheery note, when summer birds
cross the sea.

Under the shade of the trees that grow on the green hill-
side

The reapers to-day are cutting the bearded grain in its
pride ;

I hear the song and the laugh, as I sit on this three-barred
stile ;

I know these young men and maidens are happy amid
their toil.

Glad now the heart of man, as he garners the fruits of the
earth—

God's bounty unstinted—'tis well that he raises a song of
mirth,

Our thanksgiving song for Spring, with its sunshine and
gentle showers—

For Summer, its beauty and bloom—for Autumn, its fruits
and flowers.

WELCOME, ROBIN REDBREAST.

From the wildwood, dim and olden,
With its leaves all brown and golden,
Robin comes on tireless wing
Near my cottage door to sing.

I have read in legends hoary—
Heart and soul moved with the story—
How when on the accursed tree
Hung the Christ in agony,
Thou wert there on fluttering wing,
Plucking at the cruel thorn,
Plucking though thy breast was torn,
Stained for ever with Christ's life-blood,

Happy if thou wert but bringing
To the god-man all forlorn
Joy amid his untold pain :—
For this I will love thee ever,
Love thee, feed thee, harm thee never ;
And a welcome give thee ever,
When I hear thee sweetly singing,
'Mid my garden's leafless bowers,
And its withered shrubs and flowers.
Robin, when I list thee singing,
Memories of the long ago
Find me in the haunted wildwood,
All the Spring's fresh flowers ablow,
Find me in the haunted wildwood,
Near the home of happy childhood ;
And with heart untouched by sorrow,
Brooding care, or thought of morrow,
Light of step, again I'm straying
With lost loves of sunny boyhood,
Singing as we went a-maying
In the Springtime's joyous hours,

With the birds, and bees, and flowers.
Lonely bird so blithe and cheery,
All the lonesome winter dreary,
Thy song echoes sweetly,
Thrills my heart completely,
Brings me much of gladness,
'Mid life's care and sadness.

.

Merrily, merrily, merrily,
From the dawn of day,
Till the twilight grey,
Robin sweetly sings
A happy roundelay.

COME WITH ME.

Come with me to the woodland,
 So green and fresh to-day
With sweet refreshing showers that fell,
 While we in slumber lay ;
The balmy zephyrs stir the leaves,
 As from the west they blow ;
And from the hedgerows gay with flowers,
 They scatter summer snow.

The tiny wren, from mossy bough
 A welcome song will sing ;
And with its unseen humming horn,
 The bee will buzz a-wing.
And butterflies, white, red, and brown,
 That flit from flow'r and shrub,
Will lure the feet o'er copse and dell,
 And thro' the tangled scrub.

I have a song for Winter,
 When earth is bleak and drear ;
A song when buds in Spring time
 On dead-like twigs appear ;
A song for mellow Autumn,
 Crown'd with ripe fruit and grain ;
But Summer claims from lyre and harp,
 Their purest, sweetest strain.

A day 'mid glorious sunshine,
 In wood, on hill, in glen,
By brook and rill is health and wealth
 To town-pent toil-worn men,
Then seek the leafy woodland,
 Green o'erhead and 'neath your feet,
And worship at that beauteous shrine,
 So, pure, so fresh, so sweet.

IN DREAMS I STRAY.

Oh, purling streams,
Tho' but in dreams
I list your summer gladness,
Of care-worn heart
You're still a part,
A joy in manhood's sadness !

Oh, glens and woods,
Blest solitudes,
In dreams I still am straying
Amid your bowers,
And glowing flowers,
With long lost loves a-maying !

By burn and brae
We hold our way,
Birds round us gaily singing,
Afar and near,
With shout and cheer,
The woodland echoes ringing.

On cheek and brow
I feel e'en now
The wanton wind's caressing ;
While bees that roam
Afar from home,
From flow'r to flow'r I'm chasing.

And here and there,
And everywhere,
I see gay fairies dancing ;
On leaf and flower,
'Neath bush and bower,
Their milk-white palfreys prancing.

Heart all a-lip,
I watch them trip,
As o'er the streamlet's bosom
To silvery notes
Each shallop floats,
The sail a full-blown blossom.

O, purling streams !
Tho' but in dreams
I see your Summer beauty,
Of soul and heart,
You're still a part,
In manhood's toil and duty.

WAITING.

A timid maiden—there she stands,
A red rose in her snow-white hands ;
And round her brow and 'mid her hair,
The fairest flowers are woven there.

Linnetts are warbling 'mong the bowers,
The blossomed bowers of leafy June ;
And bees are gathering round the flowers,
As busy now as tho' 'twere noon.

Behind the hills that kiss the skies
The day-king slowly sinks to rest ;
The bee, grown weary, homeward flies ;
The linnet seeks its feathered nest.

And down the meadows and the leas
The twilight shadows gently creep ;
While in the brook beneath the trees,
Night's silent sad stars softly peep.

Yet that fair maiden will not go—
He said last night he would be here ;
The streams would sooner hillward flow
Than Willie leave his Mary dear.

He comes : her eyes, tho' tearful, dim,
A youthful form see down the glen ;
How throbs her heart at sight of him !
Her doubts are all forgotten then.

He comes, why was he thus so late ?
I must not tell tho' well I know ;
And well I knew the maid would wait ;
'Twas love that would not let her go.

OH, HAPPY BIRDS.

Oh, happy birds that warble,
And welcome back the Spring ;
I waken up ere day dawn,
To listen as ye sing !
The first to break the silence,
When flies the dark-veiled night,
Is the robin in the hedgerow
Piping out his heart's delight.

Thereafter from the elm tree,
That sways above my cot,
The thrush makes glad the morning
With his melodious throat ;

And here and there the blackbird,
The chaffinch and the wren
Join in the merry chorus,
And swell the thrilling strain.

Oh, happy birds—true singers—
I love ye one and all !
From out your throats melodious
No notes of sorrow fall.
Or grey or bright the dawning,
'Tis all the same to you ;
Methinks ye sing the sweeter
When clouds o'erspread the blue.

OH, BRIAR BUSH.

Oh, briar bush ! oh, briar bush !

My heart was sair for thee,
As day an' nicht, an' nicht an' day,
I thocht ye were to dee ;
I thocht ye were to dee, an' I
Nae mair again wid see
The bonnie rosies on ilk stem
Fu' sweetly smile on me.

Oh, briar bush ! oh, briar bush !

Wi' care I tendit ye
A' thro' the simmer's sunny days,
Ae burstin' leaf to see ;
The simmer gaed, but never leaf
Gae promise life was thine ;
An' I wi' pain an' sorrow saw
Thee fade awa' an' pine.

But wi' an Autumn mild as Spring,
An' winds sae saft an' sweet
That thrushes piped an' wild flow'rs smil'd,
In dell an' glen retreat,
Ae bonnie rosie an' some leaves
On thee wi' joy I saw ;
An' noo I ken wi' Spring on thee
It's mony a bud will blaw.

Then frae my bonnie briar bush
The young as weel's the auld,
Will pu' the rosies as wi' joy
To them is aften tauld
Hoo thou seem'd deid, till Autumn mild
Wi' saft win's woo'd thy stem,
An' on thee ae wee rosie burst
An' smiled, a perfect gem.

AUTUMN.

O, bonnie tints o' Autumn,
On tree, an' bush, an' flow'r,
Baith heart an' een are gladdened
Wi' yer beauty ilka oor !
An' O, the gowden sunsets
That gild the western sky—
Sic palaces an' castles
Are only reared on high !

They rise an' fa' an' pass awa',
As gin they ne'er had been ;
But O, the sicht, the time it lasts,
Is far ower seldom seen ;

Oor artists, a' the ages doon
Wi' gifts baith true an' rare
Cud never paint sic sunsets,
An' clouds sae passin' fair.

An' then when Simmer birds hae flown,
Some o' them owre the sea,
The robin frae his russet throat,
Sings sweetly on the tree ;
He sings to greet the sunrise,
He's singin' at nicht fa',
He sings when Spring an' Simmer freens
Are lost or flown awa'.

O, WOODS AN' HILLS.

O, woods aroun' dear Cromarty,
To see you ance again,
In a' your bonnie autumn tints,
My heart is unco fain !
But I am far awa' frae scenes
O' years lang past an' gane ;
An' 'tween us baith for ever rowes
The braid and trackless main.

O, hills aroun' loved Cromarty,
Fu' aft your windin' ways
I've wander'd when the birdies sang
Owerheid their cheerin' lays,

When bluebells nodded to the bees
 Abroad on hummin' wing !
Say, will I frae your wooded sides
 Again hear lav'rocks sing ?

In dreams I see the Sutors twain,
 That look oot on the Firth ;
An' wanner ower the pebbly beach,
 An' hear the gleefu' mirth
O' lads an' lasses scattered far,
 Some marri'd and some deid ;
O, woods an' hills, thochts o' the past
 Gi'e pain to heart an' heid !

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

I.

The heart that burned with Poesy's fire,
And moved the hand that swept the lyre,
Alas ! throbs nevermore ;
In dreamless sleep the minstrel's laid
'Neath ancient Dryburgh's solemn shade,
Yet in our hearts by day and night
The " Great Unknown " a pure delight
Will wake for evermore.

II.

We never gaze on ruined pile,
Nor roam the forest's leafy aisle,
 But he is ever near ;
His magic wand to sight can bring
Elfland a-dancing in a ring,
Knights armed and eager for the fray,
And shorn and shaven Abbots grey,
 The lonesome way to cheer.

III.

His border lays and matchless rhymes
We've read and re-read many times,
 And still how fresh and new ;
Through them we journey without guide
By castles on the bleak hillside,
Ford rivers flooding bank and brae,
Thread woodlands shadowed e'en by day,
 He pictures all so true.

IV.

O, Scott, of Scotland thou'rt a part,
An' dear to every Scotsman's heart,
Where'er he toils or strays !
Thy lays and lyrics from far lands
Still bring admiring pilgrim bands,
Who, roaming through wild-wood and brake,
Love dear old Scotia for thy sake,
And ever speak thy praise.

15th August, 1871.

AUTUMN.

Blow, Autumn winds across the seas ;
 The leaves are withering on each bough ;
Blow, Autumn winds across the leas ;
 The summer's fruits are garnered now ;
Blow Autumn winds across the moor,
 And whirl the brown leaves in the air ;
Blow, Autumn winds, around the door,
 And blight the blossoms lingering there.

Lord, we have wandered far from Thee ;
 And yet Thou hast remembered all ;
On wood and grove, and mead and lea,
 Thou mad'st thy rain and sunshine fall ;—

Thy mercies have been new each morn,
And fresh when evening shadows fell ;
And now with store of ripened corn,
Gathered from green hillside and vale,
The heart rejoices, and the knee ;
In adoration bends to Thee.
Thy loving promise yet holds good—
As long as lasts this world of ours,
The Spring will strew the grove with flowers,
The Summer clothe in green the wood,
The Autumn ripen fruit and grain,
And Winter shroud in white the plain.

AT HOME.

When e'er thy heart is bowed with care,
At home, kind words and smiles await thee there ;
And tender hands and loving hearts will be
Open and outstretch'd still to welcome thee.

Home ! there the footsore wanderer may rest,
And tell the story of his joyless years ;
Home ! there the grief-surg'd, sorrow-burdened breast
Finds sympathy in words, and smiles, and tears.

Home ! when in far-off brighter lands, e'en there
The lone soul yearns its simple joys to share ;
And if the trackless deep 'tis thine to roam,
Thou lov'st to talk or dream of " Home, Sweet Home.
The lowliest thatch-roof'd cot e'er built on earth
Is Home, when loving hearts meet round its hearth.

SUNSHINE.

Sunshine on the cloud-capp'd hills, where the rustling
heather grows ;

Sunshine on the purling rills, loit'ring where the orchis
blows ;

Sunshine on the gay lark's wing, lost to sight at heaven's
gate ;

Sunshine where the linnet sings, tender songs to nested
mate.

Sunshine on the little graves, 'neath the minster's solemn
shade ;

Sunshine where the rank grass waves o'er the dear ones
lowly laid ;

Sunshine on the restless sea, fretting on the golden sands ;

Sunshine on the sails at sea bearing friends to other lands.

Sunshine on the silent moor, where the winds wail night
and day ;

Sunshine round the cottage door, where my bonnie bairnies
play ;

Sunshine in the busy street, where the tide of life flows
ever,

With the ceaseless tread of feet, like the murmuring of a
river.

Sunshine ! Steal an hour from care, that within the wood's
retreat

Ye may cull the blossoms fair, blushing, blooming at your
feet ;

Sunshine ! Open wide the door—open wide the heart
to-day,

And the Sunshine bright will pour over all its cheering ray.

NOT FOR THIS EARTH.

“Not for this earth,” the widowed mother said,
As with hands crossed her heart’s young treasure slept,
“My flow’r’s fresh bloom, alas ! how soon ’tis sped,”
And as she spoke tears down her pale cheeks crept.

“Not for this earth, ah me ! did I not dream
My boy’s sweet voice and smile my heart would cheer
Morn, noon, and night, adown life’s flowing stream,
In shadow, and in shade, year after year.

“Not for this earth, a better home than this
Beyond those stars my loved one now is thine ;
There thy freed soul amid heaven’s sinless bliss
Will never know the grief that sits by mine.

“Not for this earth, God’s will, not mine, be done ;
My darling boy he gave to me in trust ;
And ere a cloud had crossed his morning sun
His spirit is with thee, the dust to dust.”

BLIND.

Blind ! and to me the light
Of the glad day is dark as starless night ;
And faces of the fondly loved and dear
I see not, though to mine, I draw them near ;
 On me their eyes, love-lighted, sweetly smile,
 My hands in their warm hands resting the while.

I know 'tis Spring when birds
From tree and hedgerow sing their loving words
To nested mates, and the soft west wind passes,
Stirring the greening leaves, and tender grasses ;
 But never bird, nor nest, nor leaf, nor grass
 I see, as down the garden walks I pass.

I do not envy those
Who look upon the beauty of a rose
Unmoved ; its fragrance as I pass it by
To me is beauty seen not by the eye ;
By it the soul is stirred ; and all around
Where'er I tread to me is holy ground.

Blind ! yet earth, sea, and sky,
Mankind, the beasts, and all the birds that fly
How dear to me, though by me all unseen ;
A deeper love within my soul has been
Deeply implanted for the lack of sight
By Him who is to all the life and light.

IN THE AULD KIRKYARD.

O, dowie, dowie is my heart,
Sair, sair my een wi' weepin',
As lane I sit in the auld kirkyard,
Whaur a' I love lies sleepin'.
Aroun' me fa' the gloamin' shades,
The winds sab low and eerie ;
To me they 'plain o'er the bricht days gane,
When Mary was my deary.

I look upo' the siller mune,
That up the sky is climbin',
An' I tearfu' hear the auld kirk bells
Their curfew changes chimin' ;
An' memories o' bricht summer hours
Come doon my life's path stealin' ;
An' I ance mair wi' my love sae fair
Meet near the thackit shielin'.

I hear her voice, sae saftly sweet,
 Doon by the burnie singin'
Her ain love sangs that my heart made greet,
 When the auld kirk bells were ringin' ;
I see the smile o' een sae blue
 Brimfu' o' pure love beamin' ;
Her lips I kiss wi' a true lover's bliss,
 Wae's me, I ken I'm dreamin'.

Her grave is in the auld kirkyard,
 An' I o' life am weary,
There aft I tryste as the gloamin' fa's
 Wi' her, my lang lost dearie.
An' happy hours come back ance mair,
 As sweet the bells are chimin',
As the siller mune the sea abune
 Her starry path is climbin'.

I LO'E THE BIRDS.

I lo'e the birds, the singin' birds,
I lo'e them ane an' a';
The robin wi' his plaintive sang
When leaves begin to fa'—
When leaves are fa'in', broon an' sere,
An' Simmer's bloom is shed,
An' in the woods an' by the brooks,
Her bonnie flowers lie dead.

I lo'e the birds, the singin' birds,
I lo'e them ane an' a',
The lark that sings amang the cluds,
When nicht has flown awa'—

When nicht, an' gloom, an' stars hae flown,
Afore the brak' o' day,
Hoo sweet aboon the moorland wild
The unseen minstrel's lay.

I lo'e the birds, the singin' birds,
I lo'e them ane an' a',
The modest lintie, green and grey,
The merry wren sae sma'.
Amang the breem an' whins, an' near
The burn they sing tae me,
Their wild an' witchin' notes for gowd
In gowpens I'd ne'er gie.

I lo'e the birds, the singin' birds,
I lo'e them ane an' a',
The mavis that frae fir tree's tap
Pipe's lood till nicht's shades fa' ;
The chaffie, yite, the merle, and chat,
I lo'e them ilka ane ;
Their sangs sae sweet my hert will cheer,
Till here my days are gane.

Sing on, chirp on, ye warblin' birds ;
I'm glad to hear your strains
In Springtime when the year is young,
An fu' o' life her veins,
In Summer when the lap o' earth
Is flow'r-strewn, and e'en when
Autumn her fruit reaps, and roon a'
Hangs winter's icy chain.

A MOONLIGHT NIGHT.

It is the noon of night ; how still the scene ;
The full moon treads the heavenly hills, and pours
Her silvery radiance on the sleeping earth.
I draw aside the curtains and her light
Streams softly through the window panes, and falls
On books, and desk, and floor. The leafless trees
Are bathed in purest light ; the winds are hushed ;
And silently the stars pace round the sky,
Southward and westward flashing from afar
Bright jets of light. Queen of the night roll on,
A thing of beauty in Orion's wake,
Till, shorn of all thy splendour in the west,
The stars long passed from sight, thou too must pale
Before the greater light that rules the day.

A CHAFFIE'S NEST.

I hae a nest, a chaffie's nest,
 Wi' young anes four or five ;
Wee helpless things I winner aft
 Hoo they are kept alive.
'Tis on an elm tree near the hoose ;
 An' twa, three times a day,
I keek tae see if they're alive,
 As I pass on my way.

The auld birds flee furth o' the nest,
 Whene'er I look therein,
An' on anither tree near hand
 They make a waefu' din ;
But I'll ne'er hairm their downy brood
 That ope sae wide their throats ;
For weel I ken, when Spring returns,
 I'll hear the chaffie's notes.

A worm or meelick I'se gie them,
The gorbets, there's but three ;
An' sune they'll flap their little wings,
An' try frae hame tae flee ;
An' then they'll hap ower grassy lawn
The auld birds hoverin' near,
Wi tasty bit, an' e'en a sang
The flichtered things tae cheer

"CUCKOO, CUCKOO."

This morn I heard within the dark fir wood
The Cuckoo's note :—" Cuckoo, Cuckoo."
At the glad sound, as one spell-bound I stood
And listen'd till the unseen wanderer flew
Beyond the quiet village on the hill,
And faint and fainter came the note to me.
Oh, bird that with the leaf to shrub and tree
Cometh again, thy notes my heart-strings thrill,
Bringing to mem'ry scenes of other years,
And faces only seen through blurring tears.
.

I listen till the note has died away,
But still I hear " Cuckoo, Cuckoo " ;
And through the greenwoods once again I stray
With lightsome hearted boys the long long day
'Neath skies serene and blue.
Oh, merry voices of youth's sweet spring days,
Ye haunt me yet adown life's winding ways !

A PERFECT DAY.

I lie beneath o'er-arching leafy trees,
Where murmur 'mong the flowers the humming bees,
And from green bough to bough, and spray to spray,
Flit happily the birds this perfect day.

To-day is Nature's holiday it seems ;
And I can hear the throbbing of her heart,
As, like a lover true, and far apart
From all that jars, my soul at peace with all,
I watch the golden sunshine as it gleams
O'er placid lake, and thro' the shadowy shade
Of woods ancestral. Oh, what happy dreams
Come to me as I hear the blackbird's call,
The robin's warblings, and the thristle's note,
And mark the cloudlets as they calmly float,
Like islands, in the blue depths overhead !

Oh, glorious Summer ! soon thou'lt pass away,
Thy flow'rs be withered, and thy green leaves shed,
The merry songsters silent ; but to-day—
This perfect day—and all the days most fair
That cheered and gladdened the world's inmost heart,
Shall live for ever with me till life's care
Will no more hurt or pain, but dwell apart ;
And I, still dreaming, e'en in winter's reign,
Shall see the golden sunlight o'er my path remain.

MINE.

No daisied fields are mine by right,
I own no trees, no lake, no river,
Still in my soul by day and night
I have and hold all these for ever.

I know not if stocks fall or rise,
No shares in bank or mine I hold ;
But at my feet and in the skies
There's wealth more precious far than gold.

For me the grass in beauty springs,
For me each tender leaf is stirred,
For me from bush and brake some bird
In Spring and Summer sweetly sings.

For me each sunrise gilds the hills,
And shades of darkness pale and die ;
For me each sunset fires the rills,
And golden pathways cross the sky.

I die ; but death takes not away
The wealth each season gave me here,
For in some better, brighter sphere,
'Midst fresher fields, the soul will stray.

HIS FIRST STEP.

Canny, canny, little mannie,
Noo ye try tae ging ;
Dinna look roon tae yer mammie ;
Canny, canny ; na ye mauna
Tae her apron cling.

Look tae whaur sits Mary waitin',
Her twa airms ootspread ;
Fit it then my brave wee laddie,
Jist as ye see oor ain daddie—
Haud ye up yer head.

Steady, stan' there ; steady, steady ;
 Noo stap oot agen ;
Dinna staumer, or ye'll maybe
Get a fa' my bonny baby
 That'll gie ye pain.

Safe, safe, noo in Mary's airms ;
 Kiss an' daut the dear ;
His first step in life's a success ;
Let us pray it may be nane less,
 As year follows year.

A SPRING POET.

Here where I stand, on dew-drench'd daisied lea,
A speckled skylark rose, and singing flew
Higher and higher tow'rds the cloudless blue;
Its breast out-welling sweetest melody ;
Circling, it warbled of bright days to be ;
And faith, and love, and hope the deeper grew,
As inmost soul the song passed thro' and thro',
Thrilling me with an untold ecstasy.

O, Spring's true poet ! all thy sweet true song
I'd gladly borrow, if I could but sing ;
I dream o'er years and friendships dead and gone ;
Thou joyous art when comes again the Spring,
And with glad throat pourest thy meed of praise
To Him who sendeth bright or sunless days.

THE OLD CASTLE.

Sheltered 'mong the dark fir trees
 Stands a Castle old and grey,
Through whose roofless rooms the breeze
 Wails and sobs by night and day ;
Ivy climbs across the walls,
 Shells of what they once had been ;
And in all the empty halls,
 See the grass is growing green.

With a throbbing heart I tread
 Through the halls where years ago
Many a youth and many a maid
 Passed the winter eve with song—
Song of love and fairy tale,
 Taught them when their hearts were light,
As the evening shadows fell,
 Deepened, darkened into night.

Here the warrior brave and bold
Hung his sword and shield to rest ;
Here the shaven priest oft told
O'er his beads with bended breast ;
Here the merry and the gay
Danced till morning streaked the east ;
Here in yonder hall by day
Oft was spread the lordly feast.

All are gone—the wrinkled sire,
Blooming youth and maiden fair,
Shaven priest, and bard whose lyre
Filled with music sweet the air ;
All are gone—their graves are near,
Years they've slept, long years they'll sleep—
Death-like silence reigneth here,
Naught may break it, 'tis so deep.

A LITTLE WHILE.

O, care, eclipsing day,
And blighting flowers,
And dark'ning with your shade
The summer hours,
When day knows no more night,
No more will fall your blight !

O, tears that ache the eyes,
Ye'll cease to run,
When in the glimm'ring west
Hath set Life's sun,
And Death's deep night lets fall
O'er us her gloomy pall !

O, sorrow that will sit
 Above the heart,
When the heart throbs no more
 Thou wilt depart ;
And endless joy will then
Heal all the heart's long pain !

O, grief that gives to song
 Of birds in Spring
A sadness all thine own,
 Thou wilt take wing,
When the soul, ravished, hears
The music of the spheres.

IMMORTALITY.

To droop and fade and wither is not death
Eternal ; Spring's warm sunshine and fresh showers,
Soft'ning the meadows, wake again the flow'rs,
Lost to the sight, when Winter's icy breath
Pass'd o'er the land ; as bright, and fair, and sweet
The flow'rs again will bloom in wood retreat,
As on Creation's morn when angels sang,
And heaven with gladsome hallelujahs rang.

So dust to dust is not man's final goal ;
Ages may pass ere Gabriel's trumpet blows,
But it shall sound ; and from its long repose,
To life unending, wake again the soul ;
Fairer the casket when its priceless gem
Is crown'd with love's unfading diadem.

STAY YOUR TEARS.

Stay your tears and cease to languish ;
Like a dreamer baby lies
With no trace of pain or anguish
In her wakeless eyes.

On her face a smile yet lingers,
E'en as when it soothed your care,
Or as when her wee, wee fingers
Wander'd 'midst your hair.

Hush'd the voice that prattled ever
All the infant lore it knew ;
And the blue eyes' sunshine never
More shall gladden you.

Fold the white hands o'er her bosom,
Spotless as the virgin snow,
Fadeless now our hearts' first blossom
Blooms where winds ne'er blow.

Kiss the lips still red as roses ;
Lay your hand upon the brow,
E'er the coffin lid encloses
All of baby now.

Yes, a lock of those fair tresses
Will be yours, wife, e'er we go
To that dreariest of places,
Where loved ones lie low.

Though within God's acre lonely
Darling baby will be laid,
We will know life's treasure only
Gone before, not dead.

FAREWELL.

Soon ours to part, perchance to meet no more ;

Yet ne'er will I forget to think of thee,

As shells long gathered from the pebbly shore

Retain the murmur of the far-off sea,

So thy loved voice will ever stay with me

And cheer amid life's care, and grief, and toil ;

And when I'm forth on mead and sunny lea

The flow'rs will give me back thy loving smile.

My friend—still friend to me where'er thou art—

Oh, sometimes think of me the longsome day ;

And, though new friends may claim from thee thy heart,

May I a place find there though far away.

Farewell, we part, and, parting, let me pray

That God's love be with thee where'er thy footsteps stray.

COMMUNION.

Oh, often at the silent noon of night,
Here in my room the loved and lost I see ;
They come and take their seats full in my sight,
Where years that are no more they talked with me.

They come and go, some one is nightly near
With whom I hold communion face to face ;
Ah, there is one of all the loved and dear
I would not miss from his accustomed place.

It is a brother in the bloom of youth,
The earnest scholar, yet a son of toil,
His soul the fair abode of manly truth ;
He cheered the downcast both with voice and smile.

Night after night he comes, and by my hearth

In his own chair I see him take his place ;

Oh, still my heart will throb with boyhood's mirth

To see love's smile glow in his youthful face.

And when his spirit form has left the chair,

And o'er me hangs the dreary spell no more,

Methinks I still will know him near me there,

And still will hear the voice beloved of yore

TO A MOUNTAIN STREAM.

Flow on thou mountain stream ;
The wild fair blossoms kiss thee, and above
Thy waters birds will warble lays of love,
And sunbeams dance and gleam,
This perfect summer day ;
Flow stream of childhood ever on thy way.

Here with a boy's delight
I loved to wander in my careless hours,
Happy, so happy, culling fruits and flowers,
Till silently the night
Shades fell, and stars would rise,
And shed their cold rays o'er me from the skies.

After long years I've come
To stray along thy margin, no one near,
And cull again thy flowers, and gladly hear
Birds singing as I roam
 'Mid scenes beloved of yore—
Scenes I've long yearned to look upon once more.

Flow on ! thou art the same ;
Time changes all things, hath it power o'er thee ?
Thou seemest all unchanged dear stream to me
 In form and name,
 Since boyhood's gleeful hours ;
Where now the loves who culled with me thy flowers ?

AT HAWTHORNDEN.

O, classic ground and scenes so passing fair !
How shall my muse essay to sing of thee ?
Never, in all my dreams of night and day,
Dreamed I these caves, and groves, and dens to see.

Oft in my boyhood with light step and gay,
Alone I've roamed wild wood and sheltered den,
Where flowerets smiled, and linnets sang to me
Songs that could thrill and move my young heart then.

But oh, how tame my boyhood's haunts to these
Mine eyes in wonder gaze upon to-day ;
Green leaves and yellow deck those grand old trees ;
And the last flowers of summer strew the way.

They tell me here the fairies love to stray,
When the full moon shines brightly down the glen ;
In glee they dance and sing till dawning day
Bids them retire within their caves again.

See where yon boulder grey o'erhangs the vale,
John Knox, the dauntless, preached long years ago ;
Boldly he'd preach, all fearlessly he'd tell
Of Heaven's bliss, and the Pit's endless woe.

Oh, beauteous scenes where Drummond sang his lays
Of liberty and love ! here could I dwell
Within thy caves, the haunts of nymphs and fays,
And where all night long warbles Philomel.

But now I take of thee a sad farewell,
Never perchance to look on thee again ;
Still often near to thee my muse will dwell
In waking dreams, O, classic Hawthornden !

WINTER.

O, sweet Spring flow'rs that blushing stood,
And waved your beauty o'er the stream
That murmured gently down the wood,
Lov'd wood, where 'neath the elm trees shade
I've dreamt full many a pleasant dream,
Ye all are dead !

O, Summer winds that sighed o'erhead,
Your music 'mid the whispering leaves,
Or kissed the lovers in the glade
I wandered through in days of yore,
Many a time on starlit eves,
Ye sigh no more.

O, happy birds that warbled sweet
All up and down the wood's dim ways,
Or upward rose on pinions fleet,
Scatt'ring abroad a loving lay
That cheered the heart for many a day,
Ye're far away !

Though now 'tis Winter dark and drear,
I know the birds again will sing
Far overhead on tireless wing,
And Summer winds sigh through the wood,
The wild wood loved for many a year,
And Spring flowers bloom within the glade,
When Winter dark and drear has fled,
Ye are not dead !

AT HER GRAVE.

On the hillside far apart
From the haunts and homes of men,
Tree-embowered, she taketh rest,
Freed of all her earthly pain.
With the murmur of the sea
Wafted to the spot so dear,
Oh, my loved one ! still methinks
You the lone sea's voice must hear.

Whither oft I sit me down,
As the night's long shadows fall,
And hold converse with my love,
And the happy days recall,
When hand linked in hand we strayed,
As fond lovers, by the sea ;
Oh, though resting, still methinks
Here love you will tryste with me !

OH ! FOR A DAY.

Oh, for a day from the city away,
 Away from its bustle, its smoke, and din,
To wander at will o'er some grand old hill,
Or by mountain stream, or madcap rill,
 Where the linnets nestle 'midst broom and whin,
 And the plovers call,
 And over all
The winds blow free. Oh, cark and care
Never come near one wandering there.
The scent of the flowers from the greenwood bowers,
 The hum of the bee as it wings its flight
Through the balmy air in the early hours,
 And the titlark's trill, these all bring delight.
 There, there I would be
 Far from city and sea
Alone for a day with the hills and woods
 In their changeful moods ;
Oh, one seems nearer to God 'mid these solitudes.

YEAR AFTER YEAR.

Year after year within the dear old home,
Loved home of boyhood's happy days, we meet,
And talk of those who nevermore will roam
The woodlands when the merry birds sing sweet ;
We miss the patter of their lightsome feet,
And careless laugh, and shout brimful of mirth,
And smile, the brightest sunshine then on earth.

Year after year, when 'mongst the western hills,
Wood-crown'd, the soft winds dally with the flowers,
And seaward down the glen still flow the rills,
And birds are nestling in the shady bowers,
Alone we visit haunts of dreamful hours,
And culling cowslips fancy yet we see
Fond lovers seated 'neath the trysting tree.

Year after year the chirping sparrows come
To the old nest beneath o'erhanging eaves,
And sunshine maketh glad the cottage home,
And Summer hides herself among green leaves ;
Still, still this weary sigh the bosom heaves,—
No Summer winds will bring across Death's sea
The dreamers sleeping 'neath yon churchyard tree.

Year after year the fields are brown and bare,
And roses fade, and birds no longer sing,
And Autumn winds whirl dead leaves in the air,
And swallows for the Summer isles take wing ;
How like a sered leaf to the past will cling
Fond memory, when nights are dark and long,
And silent ever more each treasured song.

Year after year will come the Christmas story
Of peace on earth and goodwill unto men ;
And we, brows furrowed, and with locks grown hoary,
Shake hands with dear ones, young of heart again.
Backward the eyes, tear-dimmed, will wander then
To years that are no more, when round the hearth
There was no vacant chair or lack of mirth.

IT SEEMS BUT YESTERDAY.

A laughter-loving boy at play

Among the flow'rs in woodlands old

Each long and perfect Summer day,

Till western hills were tipped with gold.

No shade of sorrow dimmed his way ;

Life passed like some soft streamlet's flow ;

Oh, this was many a year ago,

And yet it seems but yesterday.

A maiden with the sunniest curls,

And eyes the brightest, deepest blue,

The queen of all the queenly girls,

The fairest maid I ever knew.

In bowers with roses all aglow

We dreamt the Summer hours away,

Oh, this was many a year ago,

And yet it seems but yesterday.

A flow'r-decked grave I visit oft,
Far from the city's crowded ways,
There, when the evening winds blow soft,
I sit and muse on other days ;
And evermore the smile so gay
Of her the dear one lying low
Will haunt me as of long ago,
And yet it seems but yesterday.

A STARVED TITLIN'.

Puir little thing, my heart is wae
To see ye lyin' stiff an' stark ;
Ye waur sae lively, an' sae gay,
An cam' to greet me ilka day,
When I gaed tae or cam' frae wark,
Tae get yer crum', at times gey sma',
For blackey, doo, or hungry craw.

I'll nae mair listen tae yer sang
Frae bush or spray in Summer time ;
Tae hear yer trill I will think lang ;
It helped me when I tried tae rhyme ;
Ye waur a poet true, wee thing,
Tae a' that, spell-boun', heard ye sing.

I'll dig yer grave aneath the rose,
Whauron fu' sweet ye trilled wi' glee,
At mornin's dawn an' e'enin's close,
Yer cheery sang tae mine an' me ;
Was't fair or foul, nae maitter, then,
Richt merrily ye piped yer strain.

RUTH.

Mother, I love thee more than words can tell,
More than the mother on whose breast I lay ;
Thou'rt mother to the youth I loved so well ;
Entreat me not to leave thee, could I stay
In the old house and thou so far away ?

Where'er thou goest, mother, I will go ;
And where thou lodgest I will lodge with thee ;
Whatever care or sorrow thine to know,
O mother ! can it not be shared by me ?
With thee in sorrow I shall happy be.

Thy people shall be mine to love alway,
As I have loved thee, mother, all these years ;
And at thy shrine I too shall kneel and pray
To Israel's God, thy God who ever hears
The widow's prayer, and wipes away all tears.

If thou should'st die, then I will die with thee ;
And where thou'rt buried may one grave be ours ;
Life were not life, if thou wert dead to me,
Forgetful of the happy blissful hours
Love nestled with us in our blossomed bowers.

Thou wilt be lonely ; all that thou held'st dear
Are sleeping with thine own forefathers old ;
And I have now no one to cherish here ;
My home is cheerless, and its hearth is cold ;
Oh let these arms my mother still enfold !

To leave entreat me not, thine is my heart ;
Death only should dissever love's strong tie ;
For thy son's sake, oh, bid me not depart,
But keep me near thee till the hour I die ;
I cannot like my sister say good-bye.

A SUMMER WELCOME.

Methought to lay the lyre aside,
And touch no more its strings ;
But when the Summer time smiled sweet,
And blossoms blushed beneath my feet,
And laverock rose on dewy wings
To greet the dawning of the morn,
I could not then resist the charm
That glowed in Nature's face for me ;
Again with careless step and free
I sought the woods and murmuring streams,
And there in sweet and pleasing dreams
Invoked the muse to aid my themes.

On Nature, wheresoe'er we look
Is but the pages of a book,
 Widespread that loving eyes may see
 Beauty in flower and herb and tree ;
How then could I refuse to sing ?
God's image shines in everything.

I longed for Summer as the fair sweet maid
Longs for her lover when the hour has fled
He vowed to meet her in the leafy shade ;
I longed for Summer, and 'tis Summer sweet,
With sunshine streaming thro' the woods' retreat,
And gay flowers blooming, blushing at my feet.
Welcome glad Summer, e'en as maiden sweet
Will kiss her tardy lover, kiss I thee ;
A hearty welcome thou shalt have from me.

OUR COMING HOLIDAY.

Brothers, awake, see the Sun's rays are streaming
O'er meadow and mountain this morning in May ;
Awake, oh why waste the glad hours in dreaming ?
The green woods and clear streams invite you to stray.

Ye know not 'tis May-time in streets hot and dusty ;
No breeze from the hill-tops blows over your way ;
Leave unopened this morn ledgers well-thumbed and musty,
Leave types, formes, and presses, and come, haste away.

The flowers smile their sweetest in woods dim and olden ;
The birds sing their love-lays by brooklet and rill ;
On the upland the broom waves its rich blooms so golden ;
And the furze nods and rustles on each cloud-capped
hill.

Your hearts will forget all the sadness and sorrow

That darkened your path through last year's changeful
days ;

From the beauty of Nature, ah, surely you'll borrow

Some heart joy to brighten the town's shadowed ways.

PUIR BIRDIES.

Puir birdies ye look unco wae ;
“ Peeweeet, Peeweeet,” ye cheep a’ day ;
An’ cud ye speak, I think ye’d say,—
 “ We thocht the wintry days had gane ;
An’ we had paired an’ ower the lea
Waur fleein’ here an’ there wi’ glee ;
But noo we kenna fat tae dee,
 The snaw has happit a’thing green.”

“ There’s nae a blythe spot up nor doon,
Nae bield by cot or near the toon ;
We a’ maun dee an’ that gey sune,
 Sud snaw keep fa’in’ day an’ nicht.

An' oh, 'tis cauld an' frosty tee,
An' nae a beetle can we see,
Though tears are swimmin' in oor e'e ;
Life's naething but a dreary fecht."

Puir birdies I wad tak' ye in,
For wae am I tae see ye rin
At the dykesides sae cauld an' thin,
'Maist deein' on yer legs I ween ;
But crum's o' breid ye canna eat ;
Oh, sad's my hairt tae hear ye greet
In thae twa words, " Peeweeet, Peeweeet " ;
I wunner sae fat can be dune.

Twa years ago, 'midst frost an' snaw
I took a teuchit, maybe twa,
An' held them near the hearth tae thaw,
Their feeties they waur cauld as ice,
An' brocht them worms and bits o' breid,
An' tried wi' a' my airts tae feed
The helpless things—I did indeed—
But baith drapt deid 'maist in a trice.

An' sae may ye upo' the morn,
Though I sud gie ye breid an' corn,
An' at your death I'd hae tae mourn ;

But maybe there will come a thaw,
An' frae the wast a soughin' breeze,
When frost an' snaw their grip will ease,
An' ye will flee whaur'er ye please,
An' cheep " Peeweeet" tae ane an' a'.

A SPRIG OF HEATHER

A sprig of heather, pure white heather,
Sent me by some one unknown,
Stirs up feelings altogether
Inexpressible in song ;
Brings to sight the home of childhood,
Heathery brae, and tangled wildwood,
All the loved ones lost for ever
On life's darkly flowing river ;
And in dreamings I am straying,
With the loves of youth a-Maying,
Brightest sunshine streaming ever
O'er our pathway by the river,
Fern-clad brae, and heathy mountain,
Loitering brook and cooling fountain.

Oh ! lost loves, and days elysian,
Never far from memory's vision ;
In the bright hereafter somewhere,
Freed, methinks, from all earth's care,
Smiling ye will rise and greet me,
 As in years that are no more ;
Fair as ever ye will meet me
 With the smile and kiss of yore.

NIGHT AND REST.

Night has come and ye would rest,
Bird-like in the lowly nest ;
Home rest sweetest is and best.

Loved ones they have gone before,
Left you for a brighter shore ;
Ye shall meet them yet once more.

Shine and shadow have been thine,
Less of shadow than of shine ;
When rest comes shall ye repine ?

'Gainst base passions ye have striven ;
On life's sea been tossed and driven ;
At times losing sight of Heaven.

O'er your pathway weeds and flowers
Have been springing all these hours,
Watered both by gentle showers.

Yet the flow'rs they bloom'd apace,
Sweetest when most dark the place,
Smiling child-like in your face.

Here 'tis either gain or loss,
Falt'ring 'neath a tiresome cross,
Gath'ring oft but worthless dross.

Yet, 'midst all, rest comes at last—
Comes, how sweet, if faith holds fast,
And hope lives through every blast.

With God's love and favour near,
Then without a sigh or tear
Night and rest ye welcome here.



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